

## *Canadian Fish and Seafood Sustainability Briefings*

### **PROPOSAL**

#### **Background**

The idea of holding briefings to educate the marketplace on the sustainability of Canadian fish and seafood came about as a result of efforts by Greenpeace to bring consumer attention to the fact that most US retailers had no plans in place for purchasing seafood from sustainable sources. The first Sustainability Training workshop, organized and funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, was held in Vancouver in April 2008. (See Annex 1.) This workshop brought together Trade Commissioners from Washington and California, industry associations from BC, provincial and federal government representatives, as well as a representative from the Marine Stewardship Council to discuss what Canada is doing to address resource sustainability for both aquaculture and capture fisheries.

In August 2008, Mary-Jane Ginsberg, Trade Commissioner, organized two half-day briefing sessions for local associations, organizations, brokers, manufacturers, retailers and distributors at the Consulate General of Canada in San Francisco. A separate off-site meeting was held with purchasing executives of Safeway. Led by ADM David Bevan, DFO officials went through a deck outlining the initiatives being taken by the Canadian government to ensure resource sustainability. Christina Burridge (BC Seafood Alliance) and Ruth Salmon (Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance) were there to provide an industry perspective.

This model was deemed to have been very successful and the Department wishes to build upon it, holding further discussions with major buyers and key decision-makers in Canada, the US and possibly abroad.

#### **Proposal**

##### **1. Briefing of Trade Commissioners in Ottawa**

DFO, with DFAIT input, would organize a meeting in Ottawa to brief US based Trade Commissioners on the sustainability of Canada's fish and seafood. We would explore holding this meeting on October 30, to go back-to-back with DFAIT-led meetings with Trade Commissioners scheduled on October 29 in Ottawa. [However, there is some question as to whether Trade Commissioners are in fact coming to Ottawa at that time. There is also the issue of adequate notice - a decision on whether this meeting should go ahead needs to be made quickly so that arrangements can be made.]

Who will organize: This will need to be negotiated between Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal.

## **2. Outreach to Canadian Seafood Buyers (Retailers, Foodservice Operators, Brokers and Distributors)**

A briefing in Toronto (similar in scope to the one held in San Francisco) would be held with the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and large retailers, such as Sobey's, Metro and Loblaws. A separate meeting would be scheduled for the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association which represents chefs and restaurateurs. DFO would present materials outlined in section 6 in partnership with Industry (such as the Fisheries Council of Canada, the BC Seafood Alliance, and the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance.)

Who will organize: This will need to be negotiated between Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal.

## **3. Outreach to U.S. Seafood Buyers (Retailers, Foodservice Operators, Brokers and Distributors)**

Trade Commissioners in the following areas would be asked to organize briefing sessions similar to the one Mary-Jane Ginsberg put together in San Francisco:

- Boston (George Murphy)
- Denver (Kim O'Neill)
- Houston (Laura Aune)
- New Orleans (Laura Aune)
- Los Angeles (Carl Light)
- Chicago (Chris Bigall)
- Philadelphia (Beth Pomper)
- Miami (Margaret Cullen)

Following the San Francisco model, Trade Commissioners would identify key buyers in their areas, send out invitations, organize meeting space and a lunch, prepare briefing materials on participants for DFO, organize any separate meetings that might be required, and prepare a report following the event. (See Annex 1 for the report from the Vancouver session.) All costs would be paid by DFO.

While it would be desirable to hold these sessions this fall, it may not be possible. Because this initiative was not included in the Trade Commissioners' yearly planning process, it will be important to work with them on the timing of the briefing sessions. Some may be able to be completed in 2008; others may fall into the first quarter of 2009 and still others into the spring. It will depend on the ability of the Trade Commissioners to fit the event into their schedules.

Who will organize: Jane Barnett (Aquaculture) has already initiated contact with the Trade Commissioners listed. The Trade Commissioners, depending on whether they are able to accommodate it in their schedules, would organize the sessions.

#### **4. Meetings in Washington with interest groups and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)**

Meetings with interest groups would be aimed at explaining Canada's sustainable fishery and aquaculture programs. The first half of the day would be a joint meeting with Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal and interest groups. The second half of the day, Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal would hold separate meetings with interest groups. Fisheries Renewal would meet with the National Marine Fisheries Service to discuss the FishWatch program, the Fish Stock Sustainability Index, other sustainable fisheries initiatives and ecocertification.

A separate briefing session could be organized with executives of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), the association that represents the US retail industry. FMI is embarking upon a significant new initiative on sustainability and would likely be receptive to the FAM message.

Who would organize: Both Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal would need to be involved in the organization of this event, as they will hold separate sessions in the afternoon.

#### **5. Outreach to Seafood Buyers Outside Canada and the U.S.**

While the immediate focus will be on the US, meetings with major buyers further abroad will be considered for 2009. In cooperation with Trade Commissioners abroad, major buyers in foreign countries would be identified and targeted for briefings, following the same model as the U.S. briefing sessions. More discussion is required before planning could proceed.

#### **6. Supporting Products and Materials**

The products and materials that would be prepared to support these briefing sessions are:

- Deck presentation on the sustainability of Canadian fisheries and aquaculture (*status: complete, though may require updating?*);
- Pamphlet and/or backgrounder telling Canada's sustainable seafood story in plain language (*status: to be completed by Shannon Sheil, consultant to DFO Communications, once approval of the Communications Strategy "Telling Canada's Sustainable Seafood Story" is approved by Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal*);
- Information kit on sustainable seafood for retailers to make available to consumers (*status: same status as pamphlet / backgrounder*);
- Sustainable fish and seafood fact sheets (*status: draft, awaiting approval from Aquaculture and Fisheries Renewal*); and
- Media lines and questions and answers for spokespersons (*status: draft, to be fleshed out upon approval of this proposal*).

## **Anticipated Results**

A second Greenpeace report is expected to be released in fall 2008, focusing on how little progress has been made following the first report. Moving ahead with sustainability briefings as outlined above is a timely initiative and will accomplish several objectives:

- keeping Canadian seafood top of mind with buyers;
- educating buyers and decision-makers about progress being made in Canada on resource sustainability;
- removing consumer and ENGO pressure from buyers purchasing Canadian seafood;
- providing facts based information that counter personnel can give to concerned consumers; and
- providing an open forum for frank discussion on sustainability issues.

Perhaps most important, however, is that this kind of dialogue gives buyers confidence and security in their purchasing decisions. In such a difficult economic climate where the cost of seafood is increasing daily, it's important to be able to justify why buyers should continue with the category. Linking sustainability information with the already well known health benefits of seafood consumption creates a powerful message that we could help buyers deliver to their customers.

## **Anticipated Budget**

Based on the cost of the San Francisco event in August 2008, the base cost for each briefing session would be approximately \$1,900, plus travel expenses for government employees. This earmarks \$1,100 for copying presentation materials in colour and \$800 for food. Additional costs could include:

- renting meeting facilities, if necessary, and
- incremental costs for published materials, as more materials (like species-specific fact sheets) are available to distribute.

The approximate total cost to hold all the listed Canada and US briefing sessions is \$50K, although it is unlikely that all sessions would be possible or warranted. See table 1 for the breakdown of expenses. The cost to hold briefing sessions outside of Canada and the US has not been included. Cost to the departmental for travel for the ADM or DM have not been included in this estimation either, nor have any industry travel costs as it is assumed they will pay their own.

Table 1: Anticipated cost of briefing sessions to FAM:

Session	Date	Material	Food	Facility	Travel*			Total
					Flight	Meals	Hotel	
Briefing TCs in Ottawa	TBD	\$1,100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,100
Toronto	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	\$600	\$1,250	\$190	N/A	\$3,940
Boston	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,400	\$190	\$400	\$4,890
Denver	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,460	\$190	\$400	\$4,950
Houston	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,280	\$190	\$400	\$4,770
New Orleans	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$3,100	\$190	\$400	\$5,590
Los Angeles	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,540	\$190	\$400	\$5,030
Chicago	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,340	\$190	\$400	\$4,830
Philadelphia	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$1,750	\$190	\$400	\$4,240
Miami	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	N/A	\$2,360	\$190	\$400	\$4,850
Washington (special interest groups)	TBD	\$1,100	\$800	\$600	\$2,420	\$190	\$400	\$5,510
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$12,100</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$1,200</b>	<b>\$22,900</b>	<b>\$1,900</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$50,100</b>

\* Travel calculations are rough estimates based on first class flights and maximum daily allowances (minus the lunch) for 2 individuals – one from Aquaculture and one from Fisheries Renewal – for a 24 hour period. Hotel costs could vary considerably from the basic figure given.

## ANNEX 1

### Report: Sustainability Training in Vancouver, April 10<sup>th</sup> 2008

#### Participants:

##### Trade Commissioners:

- Mary-Jane Ginsberg, Trade Commissioner San Francisco
- Carl Light, Trade Commissioner, Los Angeles
- Doug McCracken, Trade Commissioner, Seattle

##### Province:

- Lorraine Saunders, Manager Seafood Development, BC Ministry of the Environment
- Bob Williams, Manager Fisheries and Seafood Sustainability, BC Ministry of the Environment

##### Environment

##### Industry:

- Christina Burrige, BC Seafood Alliance
- Ruth Salmon, Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance
- Mary-Ellen Walling, BC Salmon Farmers' Association
- Bruce Turris, Canadian Groundfish and Research Conservation Society
- Brian Mose, Groundfish Trawler and Member of Commercial Industry Caucus (CIC)

##### DFO:

- March Klaver, Finfish Officer, Aquaculture Management
- Andrew Thomson, A/ Director, Aquaculture Management Division
- Gary Logan, Regional Resource Manager - Groundfish, Groundfish Management Unit
- Trevor Swerdfager, Director General Aquaculture Management

##### AAFC

- Lauren Lavigne, Seafood Team
- Emily Mackenzie, BC Regional Office (responsible for the US)

##### Marine Stewardship Council:

- Jim Humphreys, Director of Fisheries for the Americas

#### Agenda:

8:30am - 9:00am	General sustainability overview – Lorraine Saunders and Bob Williams, BC Ministry of Environment
9:00am - 10:00am	Overview of Marine Stewardship Council process – Christina Burrige, BC Seafood Alliance and Jim Humphreys, Marine Stewardship Council
10:00am - 11:00am	Overview of Canadian Aquaculture – Ruth Salmon, Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance
11:00am - 12:00pm	Overview of BC Salmon Aquaculture sustainability – Mary-Ellen Walling, BC Salmon Farmers Association; March Klaver, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
12:00pm - 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Continue aquaculture discussion and questions
2:00pm - 4:00pm	Overview of Groundfish Integration - Bruce Turris, Groundfish Research and Conservation Society; Brian Mose, Groundfish Trawler and Gary Logan, Department of Fisheries and Oceans

**Report:**

Mary-Jane Ginsberg kicked off the discussion with a recap of her experience with Greenpeace in the San Francisco area. Luceamerica, a large seafood distributor in San Francisco (who supplies to Safeway) approached Post with questions relating to sustainability of various Canadian seafood resources. Post contacted and gathered information from AAFC, DFO, BC Seafood Alliance and the Fisheries Council of Canada for information and provided Luceamerica with a package. Luceamerica then informed Post that the reason for their request was that Safeway had been approached by Greenpeace and was now seeking information from all their seafood suppliers. Post approached Safeway who seemed very eager to obtain more information in preparation for Greenpeace's mounting campaign. This meeting was set up in effort to provide Trade Commissioners on the West Coast with the required information so that as Greenpeace mounts its campaign (which is starting on the west coast), supplier's questions can be answered quickly and effectively.

The Province then continued the discussion and provided an overview of their to promote seafood sustainability. They are firmly committed to eco-certification as proof of sustainability. 16 fisheries in BC are currently engaged in the MSC process, which represents 72% of all BC fisheries. They are working towards a goal of 100% of BC fisheries with MSC certification. They support MSC as the best eco-certifier as they are the only certification body that is 100% UN FAO compliant. In terms of aquaculture, they committed at the CCFAM meeting to look at all the available certifications for aquaculture and to recommend a strategy that would move the industry forward on certification by this June. Mary-Ellen commented that there are so many different certifications for aquaculture and that they are looking to government to recommend which one to use.

Christina Burridge then briefly spoke and indicated that 5 BC fisheries are expected to have MSC this year – 3 species of salmon (chum, pink and sockeye), hake and halibut. She then introduced Jim Humphreys from the Marine Stewardship Council who gave a very detailed explanation of the MSC process, what it entails, MSC response to Greenpeace, logo use, chain of custody certification, and the recertification process after 5 years. He indicated that of all the MSC certified fisheries, Greenpeace only takes issue with Alaskan Pollack, New Zealand Hoki and Patagonian Toothfish. In response, MSC has created and distributed fact sheets for each of these fisheries to help counteract the Greenpeace claims. He also indicated that for the most part MSC has a good relationship with Greenpeace and he feels Greenpeace is generally supportive of MSC's certification.

Trevor Swerdfager from DFO then spoke briefly as he had recently met with Greenpeace to discuss their North American campaign. He indicated that this campaign has a lot of man power behind it. Greenpeace's international arm is managing the campaign, which is the same arm that managed their effective campaign in the UK. However, they do seem open to dialogue and information exchange. He feels that this campaign is not something that can be ignored and that DFO takes this issue very seriously. He explained that he and his counterpart on the capture side, Nadia Bouffard, plan to travel to 5 or 6 centres in the US to discuss Canadian seafood sustainability with buyers and key decision makers. DFO has hired a company to put together a power point presentation and an information kit for buyers and retailers for these meetings. He says that DFO plans to address Greenpeace's concerns in a non-confrontational way (i.e. agree with Greenpeace on certain issues, but not on others) He would like these meetings to take place in late May before the summer season kicks in and before Greenpeace's campaign is fully under way.

Ruth Salmon followed up with a presentation on aquaculture (shellfish and finfish) in Canada. March Klaver from DFO then spoke about the regulations and management practices that can assure buyers that Canadian (and in particular BC) salmon is sustainable. Mary-Ellen provided all Trade Commissioners with the promotional material that the BC Salmon Farmers use and

updated everyone on their advocacy efforts to date. Mary-Ellen is also meeting with key US buyers and retailers to discuss farmed salmon sustainability.

Bruce Turris and Brian Mose finished off the day with an overview of the sustainability of BC groundfish. The Groundfish industry is particularly concerned with the Greenpeace campaign as POP (Pacific Ocean Perch) is on the Greenpeace red list, and the I-5 corridor, (in particular California), is the main market for POP. Bruce and Brian explained the history of the groundfish integration program; the problems with rockfish conservation and by-catch they were seeking to address; how groundfish integration works; and the on-board, dockside and video observation systems. During the presentation they emphasized that no other fishery in the world has 100% observer coverage and complete accountability of all by-catch. They also highlighted their work with other US trawl fisheries to promote the idea of 100% observer coverage on all fishing vessels. MSC was particularly interested and impressed with this presentation, as were the Trade Commissioners. Mary-Jane Ginsberg in San Francisco wanted both Bruce and Brian to come down to meet with buyers in her territory.

**Results/ Follow-up:**

- DFO to provide more information on their outreach efforts.
- Sustainability package to be sent out to Trade Commissioners.
- There was much discussion surrounding creating a small and simple "Did You Know" pamphlet with a few quick facts about the sustainability of various seafood species. This idea needs to be further developed and could be a possible discussion item at the SVCRT.